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ABSTRACT

The school-based job placement model described in the report was implemented as a cooperative effort between the Reading-Muhlenberg Area Vocational-Technical School and the Bureau of Employment Security. It was designed to help students trained for entry-level positions to find jobs in the areas of their training. General objectives of the program included developing the student's self-esteem, good work habits and attitudes, and providing opportunities for earning a wage while learning a skill. Recommendations include a discussion of possible areas of expansion for this program and similar placement programs. Related information includes a list of specific duties of the job placement specialist, a job preparation list for students, memorandums regarding employment reports of 1975 graduates, a five-year senior student placement report, and two followup instruments for determining the employment status of graduates. Supplemental forms are appended. (KH)

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FINAL REPORT

1974-75

School Based Job Placement Service Model

Reading-Muhlenberg Area
Vocational-Technical School

(Project No. 20-4020)

Submitted By

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Job Placement Specialist

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READING-MUHLENBERG AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

June 30, 1975

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Bureau of Vocational Education
Research Coordinating Unit

VT102733

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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INTRODUCTION

The school-based job placement service was established to fill a void in the business education and vocational education process. Much time and effort has been devoted to training students in business education and the vocational-technical areas. These students are well trained for entry-level positions upon completion of their high school training. The problem develops as these young people begin to enter the labor market. They are suitably trained for entry-level jobs but have little or no training or help in finding employment. The result is that although there may be jobs in areas related to their training, many students eventually find employment in unrelated areas. It is thought that the most effective means of helping graduates find employment in areas related to their training is through a school-based job placement service.

Implementation

The school based job placement service model was implementated at the Reading-Muhlenberg Area Vocational-Technical School on February 11, 1974 with the employment of the job placement specialist.

The initial implementation included our orientation to the four sending schools. It was determined that since the placement specialist had not previously been on the four sending schools staff, he should attempt to become familiar with all aspects of their school curriculum. This was done by touring the schools and spending some time with each instructor to get an in-depth evaluation of the business education program. It is obvious that if the job placement specialist is going to sell the students to local employers he should be reasonably well versed as to the level of training and potential of the graduates. This orientation to the school took up much of the time during the first six weeks of the program.

The school based job placement service is a cooperative effort between the school and the Bureau of Employment Security. Early in the program, meetings were held with representatives of the B.E.S. to determine what type of working relationship might develop. A B.E.S. contact person was designated and through subsequent meetings a working relationship has developed.

It is hoped that as the program develops the working relationship with the B.E.S. will continue to develop. Graduates of our school will undoubtedly benefit through the close cooperation of both organizations.

Initially, much time was devoted to working with the cooperative education coordinator and the employers at the training stations which he has developed. It was thought that since the placement service will be dealing with these same employers, we should become familiar with their operations. Also, it was concluded that most of these training sites would eventually develop into full time jobs upon graduation.

It was apparent that if we were going to be placing graduates in jobs we would need various types of information on each individual. We determined the types of information we would need would include personal information as indicated on the data sheet, ratings as to their employability (from their instructors), and an indication as to their post graduation plans. With this information, we know if a student plans to go to school, enlist in the military, look for work either related or unrelated to their area of training, stay at home and not seek employment etc. The rating sheets are of particular value when the instructors leave for the summer and we are unable to get a personal recommendation from them.

The current economic conditions forced us to devote additional time to job development. Going out to contact potential employers is possibly the most important aspect of the placement service. We have found that in general, some employers are still somewhat uninformed of the capabilities of the Vo-Tech School and the competencies of its graduates. They are normally most receptive and eager to learn more about our programs. We have found that it is not too difficult to convince an employer to employ a Vo-Tech graduate if he has an opening in an appropriate area. It is obvious that when an employer is going to hire a Vo-Tech graduate

for the first time we want to make sure that the person or persons we refer will be able to adequately handle the job. If the employer's first experience is unpleasant or unrewarding, we cannot expect him to return to us as subsequent openings arise.

As time has passed, it has become evident that the functions of the placement service overlap with those of the other co-op instructors. We all make contacts with potential employers. The co-op instructors make contacts to find and develop training stations and to follow-up students as they graduate. Also, they work extensively seeking part-time and summer jobs for students. They have been quite involved with co-op job placement and follow-up. Since we started, the job placement specialist worked primarily with pre-employment preparation-job placement and follow up, and did a substantial amount of career counseling.

The follow up component of the job actually begins the first Christmas after graduation. We mail Christmas cards and enclose a response card to be filled out by the student and returned. This gives us an idea of what the student is doing. It is expected that by that time most students will have found a situation of a relatively permanent nature, i.e. full time employment (related or unrelated), school, service, staying at home, etc. These results will be tabulated during January. From these follow up forms we will also be able to determine which students need or desire additional help in finding employment. We also have a one and three year follow-up by enclosing a response card when we mail the graduate's birthday card. The feedback facet of the job will be conducted on a year round basis. We will be continuously trying to determine what

types of skills local employers need. Attempts will be made to determine which areas we are over training and in which we are undertraining. As this information is gathered it will be possible to make appropriate adjustments in the curriculum at the school. The manner in which feedback information will initially be gathered will be through personal interviews with employers and a mailing questionnaire.

The co-op and job placement functions of the placement service will take place primarily in January. This is when students are available for part-time employment and hopefully leading to full time positions. October and November will be devoted to student interviews and job preparation instructions. The month of December will be devoted to finding jobs for the students.

It has become obvious that placement activities can be conducted much more smoothly while school is still in session. Once the students graduate they scatter in many directions. As job openings become available after graduation it is frequently quite difficult to get in touch with the most qualified graduates to refer them for the jobs. Frequently as many as three to five phone calls over a period of several days are required just to determine if the individual is interested. Many times we resort to a letter in a final attempt to contact our graduates. Hopefully, as we place more and more people in jobs, additional students will continue to use our services after graduation. The problem of not being able to contact graduates will be overcome if it becomes known that we can help them and they keep in closer touch with us.

We have met with the executive director of the Chamber of Commerce of Reading and Berks County. Many of the initial contacts from employers who might be considering locating in Reading are channelled through the Chamber. We have offered to be of assistance to them. The Chamber has sent out information about our placement service to all their members to let them know that our services are available.

Problem

Although many evaluation studies of vocational education have found systems for job placement services inadequate or nonexistent, little if any effort has been extended to eradicate this dilemma. The seriousness of the problem is amplified when one examines the national employment statistics. At present there is a total unemployment rate of 9.2 per cent of the labor force.

After analyzing the problem it is evident that higher unemployment rates exist for teenagers, blacks and women. The rates of unemployment have increased since April, 1969.

Related Literature

One criticism of vocational education at the secondary level has been the lack of attention given to job placement. This component of student personnel service program is unstructured in many instances and nonexistent in others. Critics from within vocational education and those on the outside have been pointing to this inadequacy for sometime. Venn (1964) suggests that job placement practices exist at the high school level are ineffective or nonexistent although the need is acute and complex. Further, he recommends: "high schools, two-year colleges, universities and state departments of education should encourage employers to make greater use of the placement offices of educational institutions (p. 174)."

In Section 143 of Part D of the 1968 Amendments it states that exemplary programs should be developed for all students that involve intensive occupational guidance and counseling during the last years of school and for initial job placement.

Rosen (1970) states that counselors must take a more active role in helping young people make the transition from school to work. He specifically alludes to the fact that counselors must act as change agents by recommending to employers whose hiring standards are not valid that they should be modified. Although one can concur, the question of whether counselors are sufficiently aware of occupational information is questionable, specifically at the local level. Venn (1964) offers support by stating:

> The failure of educators to understand the relationship between their work and the future occupational role of their students has inhibited the development of vocational guidance, placement and follow-up despite pleas, recommendations and studies to the contrary (p. 149).

Further support is offered by Froehlich (1950) when he concludes a placement service model in schools is essential. He bases this on his belief that students need and deserve help in taking action upon their decisions. He states, "the school has a unique opportunity to assist students to find their proper place (p. 229)."

A somewhat similar position is offered by Rosen (1970) who concludes:

> If counselors are to become a part of the linkage system between school and work, they will have to change their posture from "neutral" sources of occupational and job information to active developers of information and to participants in the job seeking process.

Humphries and Traxler (1954) considered placements as ". . . the last practical step in the formal educative process--a step that helps to make the student's education effective socially (p. 237)."

The success of a project in vocational guidance and job placement for culturally deprived high school youth was attributed to a significant degree to the development of relationships with schools, business, labor, students and other agencies (Vocational Guidance Service, 1969). Evidently this form of activism is what should replace the neutral roles of the pupil personnel services staff in order to produce effective results. Effective results being in part successful job placement. However, the volume of placement is not the ultimate evaluation for job placement. Zanzalari (1960) found that the lack of adequate criteria for evaluation was evident in the placement function of the student personnel service program.

In summary, it appears that most public secondary schools do not have a definitive structure within the student personnel service program to effectively provide all students with strategies and procedures for effectively obtaining a job. It is clear that past and current literature reflect a need to establish a program of job placement for all students. This program should provide for channels of communication among school personnel with employers, the state and local employment service and community agencies to obtain occupational information which can be used to provide strategies and procedures for the job placement of all students.

Objectives

The general objective of the program is to give the student an exposure to the world of work so that he may learn the dignity of work and develop the proper attitudes and characteristics for it.

Specific objectives of the program are to encourage and to develop specific skills in which the student-learner demonstrates aptitude and interest.

To improve and expand the technical-vocational schools classroom, the student-learner who will participate in the program may expect to:

1. Work experience in a career objective occupation.
2. Earn a wage while he learns a skill.
3. Develop good work habits and attitudes.
4. Learn desirable personal traits.
5. Become more aware of the dignity of work.
6. Develop greater self-esteem, leading to more self-confidence.
7. Learn how to handle money.
8. Develop a greater awareness of the economic, social, and personal relationships necessary for successful participation in the working world.

The employer who participates in the program may expect:

1. A local supply of future employees properly oriented to the world of work.
2. Participation in the planning of the student's training plan.
3. Assistance in training the student in the particular manner requested by the employer.
4. Use of guidance and testing techniques which may bring to

light a student's hidden talent.

5. Advantages of learning about new training techniques from the teacher-coordinator.

Recommendations

We all know how important it is for all individuals to be happy with their job. When you have this fact in mind you can see how important the job placement program is for the overall student education. The objective of the job placement specialist becomes more and more involved with matching the student with the job and not just a placement of the student on a job.

It must be remembered that today, in Berks County, there are over five thousand (5,000) employers, four hundred (400) of which are major firms, employing as many as three thousand (3,000) employees. Consider, then, the contacts that must be made with these firms all year round, not only to maintain our current job placemert relationship but to enlarge it in the future. Public relation visitation work is the same as advertising and as any wise company knows once you stop advertising sales go down.

Everyone is aware of the current tight labor market, not only in our area, but the nation as a whole. You must remember that only so many students can be absorbed, and now, with the unemployment in Berks County over 9 per cent, job competition becomes even more severe. Our students are always competing with sixteen other county high school students. So, therefore, if I do not see an employer ... at least periodically ... certainly one of the other school's representatives will, which may result in the loss of job orders for Reading and Muhlenberg District Schools. With this in mind, most of my time has been spent in job development and less time in one of my other functions.

Also, in school year 1975-1976, Reading High School Business Education students will be ready for their cooperative Work Study Program. This involves over one hundred thirty (130) seniors. Couple this figure with Reading-Muhlenberg AVTS, Muhlenberg, Central Catholic and Holy Name High Schools and the figure approximates seven hundred (700) students! That's seven hundred (700) students needing Job Placement Services.

In conclusion, as of today, Job Placement is at the top of the priority list for the State of Pennsylvania, with plans to expand the overall state level projects by providing funds for other project sites. Also, seventeen (17) states have maintained a mandatory vocational job placement service. Mr. James Lewis and Dr. Stephen Franchak, Research Associates with the research coordinating unit, Pennsylvania Department of Education in Harrisburg, have already been in contact with us in relation to using our job placement project as a model project. They would like us to be one of their resource persons.

The job placement program is as important as any of the instructional areas in the school system. Once we train the student in an academic or vocational field, we should not drop the student upon graduation. We all know graduation is one of the most important events because then for the first time, the student must face the World of Work. In the past (before Co-op or Job Placement) very little preparation time was given to students. How to contact an employer, or how to sell his skills on an interview, or how to fill out an application form, was always left to the discretion of the student. This, to many employers, reflected on the school and its teachers. Keeping this in mind, job placement should be part of the overall education system.

In addition, I feel our program could grow to a much larger program by just extending this service to Adult Evening School at the Vo-Tech and home schools. Most evening school students are attending classes to either improve their skills for advancement in their present field or training for a new field. Since I have been at my present job as Job Placement Specialist, I have received job orders from our current employers that hire our daytime students, asking for an older person or for a person to start work before January, or a person to work full time, etc. If my program would be extended to the Adult Evening Program, I could give full service to employers. Also, I cannot think of a better way to give service and build up a good rapport with the general public (Our Tax Payers).

THE ROLE OF THE JOB PLACEMENT SPECIALIST

AT READING-MUHLENBERG AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Specific Duties.....Job Placement of Business Education Students

1. Develop and put into operation a job placement program for students on a part-time or full-time basis.

2. He shall maintain close contact with industry and coordinate and assist in placing students in employment or advanced schooling.

3. He shall, while in contact with industry, determine the needs of the employer and employee for future curriculum development.

4. Develop and operate an employer follow-up program.

5. He shall develop and maintain constant follow-up of graduate students to ascertain their progress and secure information from them as to the relative effectiveness of the curriculum.

6. Organize a Craft Committee.

7. Meet with Craft Committees along with the teachers of the Business Education programs in an effort to gain an insight into each area of instruction.

8. Develop a plan whereby suitable occupational information will be filtered into the participating schools in the amounts needed and to the person to whom you are directed to forward the materials.

9. Have an awareness of public relations opportunities for the sending schools and the Vo-Tech school.

10. Develop a plan and put into operation an open exchange of philosophies in regard to the Business Education programs at the home schools and the Basic Data Processing, Keypunch and Computer operation of the Vo-Tech school.

11. We should be fully aware that the diversified duties of the position at times will not be confined to the normal school day.

SUNDRY JOB PREPARATION MATERIALS

Mr. Grande and I prepared and implemented the following with all vocational students.

1. Computer Assisted Placement Services
2. Will The Kid Get A Job?
3. Letter of Application
4. Job Resume
4. Attitude
5. Human Relations on The Job
6. Holding A Job
7. How Not to Keep The Job
8. Kinds of Salary - Methods of Payment
9. Learning About Fringe Benefits
10. Federal Income Tax
11. Payroll Deductions
12. Kinds of Salary
13. Checking Account
14. Instructor Rating Sheet
15. Student Registration Form
16. Increased Library Resource Materials

READING-MUHLENBERG AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

MEMORANDUM

TO: JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
PRINCIPALS
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS
OTHERS

FROM: MR. CARL E. STRITTMATTER, SUPERINTENDENT
DR. JACK D. NEAL, SUPERINTENDENT
MR. CHARLES H. MATTERS, DIRECTOR
MR. JOSEPH J. GRANDE, COORDINATOR OF INDUSTRY

DATE: JUNE 6, 1975

SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT REPORT 1975 GRADUATES

Job outlook dips in Berks

READING TIMES

READING, PENNA.

FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1975

The recession in Berks County has not been as bad as the rest of the nation — until now.

According to statistics released Thursday by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Employment Security, local economic indicators dropped to within range of the national recession figures.

PAUL H. LYSOBY, manager of the Reading employment office, said employment fell, unemployment climbed and gross earnings were reduced during April.

There were 300 jobs lost during April, Lysoby said. This makes 9,100 fewer jobs in Berks County than there were in mid-April 1974.

"The rate of unemployment climbed to 8 per cent from 7.2 per cent in March," Lysoby said.

IN APRIL of 1974, the unemployment rate was 3.2 per cent in the county.

Lysoby said the 8 per cent figure compares with a nationwide rate of 8.6 per cent and a state average of 9 per cent.

"Triggered by economic sluggishness," Lysoby said, "current employment is down 6,100 or 11.3 per cent from April 1974."

The employment manager said that the job losses in the

(Turn to Page 18, Col. 4)

Berks labor statistics show decline in April

(Continued from Page 1)

manufacturing sector of the economy have left a work force of 48,000 by mid-April. This is the lowest level since 1968.

LYSOBY SAID those working are getting paid less. Based on a 37.6-hour work week, average gross weekly earnings stand at $167.32. This is a decrease of 68 cents from March.

The average hourly wage at mid-April was $4.45. Last April, the hourly wage was $4.23. But the work week was an average of 12 minutes longer.

Lysoby said the nonmanufacturing sector of the economy is showing significant weakness.

"DURING THE past 12 months," he said, "losses in construction, transportation, public utilities, trade, finance, insurance and real estate far exceeded job additions in local government and services."

The nonmanufacturing job level stands at 77,900. This is 900 jobs fewer than April of 1974.

Some economic experts are predicting that the recession is going to "bottom out" in May and June.

But April has been the low point on the economic charts for Berks County.

Memorandum
Subject: Employment Report 1975 Graduates

As of June 6, 1975 an employment report of the Seniors of the Reading-Muhlenberg Area Vocational-Technical School was prepared. In reference to the Job Outlook Picture, as indicated by the article on Page 1 and other extenuating circumstances, we are very pleased and encouraged. Of the 376 Seniors, 197 are employed. This represents better than 52% of our students gainfully employed in the labor market.

Of the number of Seniors employed, I am pleased to report that better than 75% are employed in an occupation directly related to their Instructional Program.

A detailed Employment Survey will be completed by the July meeting.

READING-MUHLENBERG AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

MEMORANDUM

TO: JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE
PRINCIPALS
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS
OTHERS

FROM: MR. CARL E. STRITTMATTER, SUPERINTENDENT
DR. JACK D. NEAL, SUPERINTENDENT
MR. CHARLES H. MATTERS, DIRECTOR
MR. JOSEPH J. GRANDE, COORDINATOR OF INDUSTRY

DATE: JULY 8, 1975

SUBJECT: EMPLOYMENT REPORT 1975 GRADUATES

Since our Employment Report of June 6, 1975 we have contacted the unemployed graduates by phone and mail and the attached report is a breakdown by Instructional Area indicating the number of graduates directly employed, number of graduates employed related and non-related, those graduates that plan to further their education or enter the armed forces and the number of graduates not available for work. Also, those that are unemployed.

In reference to the Job Outlook picture as shown in the June report, our findings now qualify the pleasure and encouragement we indicated.

The educational development and the work skills imparted by our fine staff will enrich the lives of our graduates.

READING-MUHLENBERG AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Senior Student Placement Report

July 8, 1975

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DIRECT	EMPLOYED RELATED	NON-RELATED	POST H.S. TRAINING	ARMED FORCES	UNEMPLOYED	PERCENTAGE PLACED
Class of 1971 GRAND TOTALS	311	133	19	22	39	17	81	74%
Class of 1972 GRAND TOTALS June 25, 1972	295	137	31	37	36	22	32	90%
Class of 1973 GRAND TOTALS June 6, 1973	364	223	17	41	24	12	47/14*	91%
Class of 1974 GRAND TOTALS June 6, 1974	331	202	22	26	12	13	34/22*	90%
Class of 1975 GRAND TOTALS July 8, 1975	351	151	13	71	25	29	53/9*	85%

* Not available for employment

READING-MUHLENBERG AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Senior Student Placement Report ..... July 8, 1975

INSTRUCTIONAL AREA	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	EMPLOYED					NOT AVAILABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT*	UNEMPLOYED
		DIRECT	RELATED	NON-RELATED	POST H.S. TRAINING	ARMED FORCES		
Air Conditioning & Sheet Metal	13	4	0	5	0	1	3	
Architectural Drafting	11	7	0	1	1	1	1	
Auto Body Repair	10	3	0	2	0	1	4	
Appliance Repair	10	1	0	6	0	2	1	
Automotive Trades	17	10	1	3	1	1	0	1*
Basic Data Processing	14	4	0	2	2	0	6	
Cabinetmaking	14	7	1	4	1	0	0	1*
Carpentry	20	7	0	4	0	2	7	
Commercial Art	10	2	0	4	3	0	1	
Cosmetology	12	8	0	1	0	0	2	1*
Computer Programming	14	6	0	3	2	1	2	
Chemical Technology & Instrumentation	9	0	0	1	4	2	2	
Distributive Education	18	18	0	0	0	0	0	
Engineering Drafting & Design	12	3	0	4	3	1	1	
Electrical Maintenance & Construction	12	2	3	4	0	1	2	
	196	82	5	44	17	13	32	3*

READING-MUHLENBERG AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Senior Student Placement Report ..... July 8, 1975

INSTRUCTIONAL AREA	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	EMPLOYED			POST H.S. TRAINING	ARMED FORCES	NOT AVAILABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT* UNEMPLOYED	
		DIRECT	RELATED	NON-RELATED				
Electronic Technology	12	2	0	0	1	9	0	
Food Service - Baking	8	7	0	0	0	0	1	
Food Service - Chef Practice	3	2	0	0	0	0	1	
Health Assistant	18	13	0	1	2	0	0	2*
Keypunch	11	7	0	2	0	0	1	1*
Letterpress Printing	9	3	0	2	0	1	3	
Machine Shop Practice 2	4	3	0	1	0	0	0	
Machine Shop Practice 3	16	4	3	5	0	2	2	
Motorcycle, Outboard Motor Garden Tractor Repair	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1*
Offset Printing	13	7	0	2	0	2	2	
Plumbing & Heating	8	5	1	0	0	0	2	
Textiles & Clothing	15	7	1	1	3	1	0	2*
Trowel Trades	12	1	1	5	0	0	5	
Upholstery	14	6	2	3	2	0	1	
Welding	10	1	0	5	0	1	3	
	155	69	8	27	8	16	21	6
TOTALS	351	151	13	71	25	29	53	9*

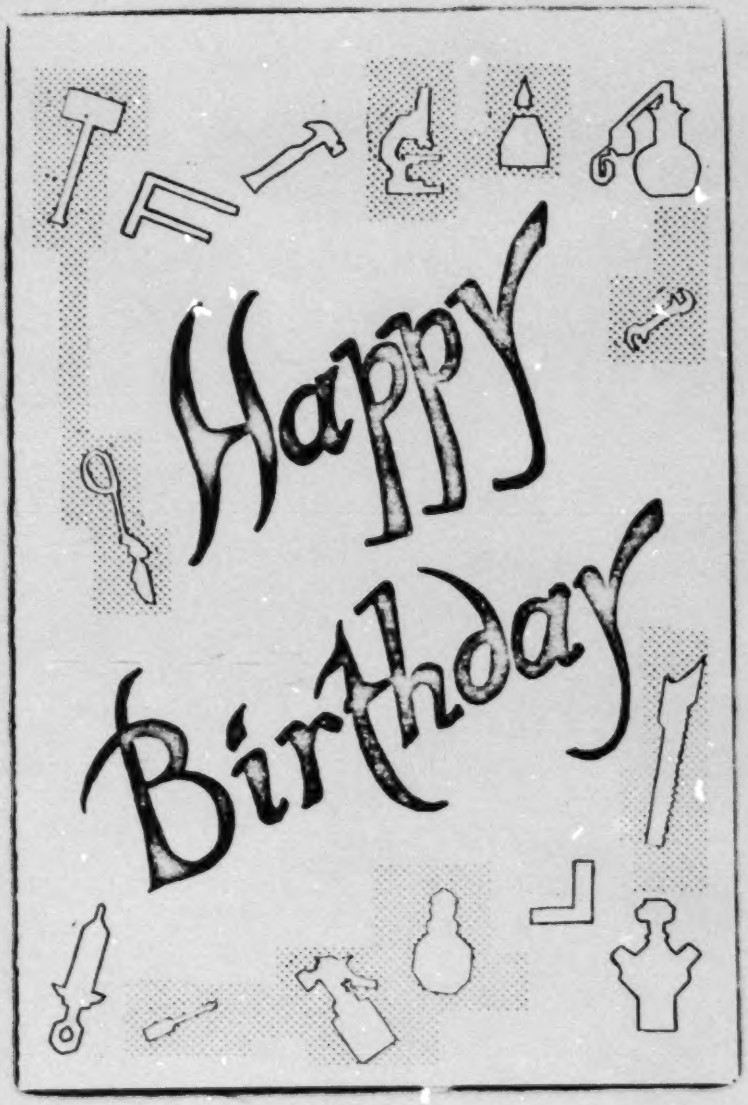
APPENDED MATERIAL (GREETING CARDS AND FORMS) HAVE BEEN ALTERED AT ERIC/CICE TO ENHANCE THEIR REPRODUCIBILITY.

THE COVER OF THE "CHRISTMAS CARD" WOULD NOT REPRODUCE IN MICROFICHE AND WAS, THEREFORE, DELETED.

Refer to Page 4 of this report.

Seasons Greetings

FROM THE READING - MUHLENBERG TECHNICAL SCHOOL


Happy
Birthday

Refer to Page 4 of this report.

Dear Graduate:

Please fill out this card and mail it as soon as possible. We would like to know about your present activity. We also are attempting to keep our mailing addresses up to date. Please inform us whenever you change your mailing address.

We appreciate your cooperation.

Name ..... Telephone .....

Present Address ..... ☐ Check if changed

Armed Forces ..... Branch.....

Vocational School Course .....

Employed by .....

Employer's Address .....

Present Salary .....

Describe the Type of Work You Do .....

.....

If Unemployed, Give Possible Reasons for Inability to Obtain a Job .....

.....

Refer to Page 4 of this report.

Dear Graduate:

Kindly fill out the enclosed card and mail it as soon as possible. We would like to know about your present activity. This information is needed for a follow-up study of our graduates which we must conduct each year for the State of Pennsylvania. Please be specific.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Name .....Telephone .....

Present Address .....

Armed Forces ..... Branch .....

Vocational School Course .....

Employed By .....

Employer's Address .....

Present Salary .....

Describe the Type of Work You Do .....

.....

Has Your Vocational School Training Been Helpful?.....If Not, Why Not?....

.....

If Unemployed, Give Possible Reasons for Inability to Obtain a Job .....

.....